Meeting of Chief Executives of BIMSTEC Railways

2993. SHRI HARISH RAWAT:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:
SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Railway held first meeting of the Chief Executives of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Railways in September, 2004; and

(b) if so, what follow-up action have, so far, been taken to promote regional co-operation among the BIMSTEC countries in the matter of transportation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NARANBHAI RATHWA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The first meeting of Chief Executive Officers of Railways of BIMSTEC nations was held in September, 2004. During the meeting Indian Railways had offered to train the railway personnel of BIMSTEC nations free of cost. The offer was subsequently extended to Mekong-Ganga Cooperation countries during the 2nd meeting of Chief Executive Officers of Railways of BIMSTEC nations in Yangon in 2005. As a follow-up action, Indian Railways, have started free training to Railway personnel of member countries.

Spending by Railways during Eleventh Plan

2994. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways set to spend Rs. 500,000/- crores during the Eleventh Plan;

(b) if so, how far this Plan shall improve the working of the Railway Department particularly theft cases and railway accidents during the Eleventh Plan; and

(c) how this amount shall be managed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NARANBHAI RATHWA): (a) The 11th Plan has not been finalized.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Freight movement by Rail Network

2995. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that lack of effective freight transport by rail network and delivery logistics are some of the impediments in the economic growth of the country;

(b) whether in relation to China, India's freight movement by rail network is poor and tariff high;

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government to identify and remove the shortcomings and make the system competitive by international standards;

(d) whether Government are considering to open up freight movement by rail network to foreign players; and

(e) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NARANBHAI RATHWA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir. Between 1992-2002, the two railways carried almost the same volume of passenger traffic (Passenger Kilometers), but the Chinese Railways carried four and half times the freight traffic (Tonne-Kilometers) carried by Indian Railways. The average freight tariff is India is almost 66 per cent higher than that in China.

(c) In order to substantially increase our capacity for freight transport, it is planned to construct two Dedicated Freight Corridors (on Western and Eastern routes) at an estimated cost of Rs. 22,000 crore. Besides, a large number of other projects like New Lines, Doubling, Gauge Conversions Traffic Facility Railway Electrifications etc. have been sanctioned and the works are in progress. After completion of these works, the capacity constraints will be removed substantially and will increase throughput on the Indian Railway network.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.